Marine Aquarium Council

Best Practice Guidance for the Core Handling, Husbandry, and Transport International Performance Standard for the Marine Aquarium Trade

Issue 1 – July 1, 2001

MAC Standards Review and Committees Responsible for This Document

This Best Practice Guidance document is intended to be read in conjunction with the MAC Core Handling, Husbandry, and Transport Standard and will be in effect until at least July, 1, 2003.

This Handling, Husbandry, and Transport Best Practice Guidance document and its accompanying Core Standard will also be used in a series of test certifications, the feedback from which will be reviewed at a MAC Certifiers Workshop.

Suggested amendments to both will be forwarded to the MAC Standards Committee for their review.

Amendments Issued Since Publication		
Amend. No	Date	Description of Amendment
-	July 2001	Issue One Published

Contents

How to Use This Best Practice Guidance Document

This Best Practice Guidance document has been written to assist stakeholders—especially, resource managers, collectors, and industry operators seeking to be certified—in interpreting and achieving compliance with the MAC Core Standards.

This Best Practice Guidance document does not describe additional requirements beyond those already contained in the MAC Core Standards but provides clarification, background information and examples of how compliance could be achieved. This document contains a series of recommendations on methods and techniques and describes the type of evidence that certifiers will be looking for when undertaking an assessment of compliance with the MAC Core Standards. It includes the types of documentation of practices, policies, procedures, and historical records that should be made available by the certification client to expedite the audit process.

This Best Practice Guidance document is also meant to help certifiers identify the types of issues they will need to research and develop investigative tools for their research. The examples in this document are not exhaustive.

This Best Practice Guidance document is also a teaching tool for those who are developing techniques for implementing the appropriate MAC Core Standard and monitoring ongoing compliance.

The MAC Secretariat has published this document based on consultation with stakeholders and the input of the Standards Advisory Group. As MAC Certification audits are conducted, data from participants and other stakeholders will enable the Marine Aquarium Council to improve and update this guidance document. The Marine Aquarium Council asks certifiers and other users of the MAC Certification to comment on and share their experiences using this document.

Best Practice Guidance: MAC Core Handling, Husbandry, and Transport Standard

0.1 Purpose

To provide guidance on how to comply with the requirements of MAC Core Handling, Husbandry, and Transport Standard so that the handling, husbandry, packing, and transport of marine aquarium organisms ensures the optimal health of the organisms.

1 General Requirements

1.1 Contract and Order Documentation

1.1.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that they:

- fully understand the requirements of their buyer and inform him/her when it is not possible to fulfill a particular order;
- are aware of which species are available and aware of those that are in the MAC "Unsuitable Species" Annex of the Core Standards documents and should not be requested; and
- document the requirements of their buyer when these are given verbally.

Where innumeracy and illiteracy are a problem, all organizations in the chain of custody should be able to demonstrate how all parties understand the requirements.

1.1.2 Review of Requirements

1.1.2.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to demonstrate or document how they interpret the orders placed upon them by the buyer and how this is transferred, if necessary, into a clearly understandable form to all personnel. For example,

- Is the information complete?
- If call-off or other blanket conditions exist (that is, where the buyer does not issue separate purchase orders for each batch of marine aquarium organisms required but sends one order at the beginning of each month that describes weekly requirements), are they appropriate to this particular contract?
- Is the buyer requiring a written confirmation to a regulatory requirement such as a negative chemical test certificate from a lab that is ILAC accredited?

1.1.3 Ability to Meet Requirements

1.1.3.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate how they are clear as to what the buyer requires. If they are unable to meet the requirements of the buyer, then they should inform him/her by an agreed method of communication and record keeping.

All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to

document or demonstrate how they ensure that what they have asked to supply does not conflict with local and legal regulations and how they have clearly identified the additional care and diligence that is required when dealing with the batching and handling of unusual specimens.

All organizations in the chain of custody are prohibited from selling uncertified marine aquarium organisms as MAC Certified in an attempt to meet the quantity requested by their buyer.

1.1.4 Communication of Purchase Requirements

1.1.4.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate how they communicate in a timely manner with their buyer. This should include:

- how they keep up to date with changes in industry practice, at the species level, with respect to marine aquarium organism handling, packaging, and husbandry methods;
- how the order is placed, i.e., whether through a middleman/woman or by telephone, email, fax, etc.;
- how buyer enquiries and orders are handled and documented; and
- how buyer complaints are recorded and corrective action put in place.

1.1.4.2 Where collectors and fishers use an agent or middleman/woman for the consolidation and transport of the marine aquarium organisms that they collect, their buyer should still maintain the ability to communicate directly with them.

1.2 Handling, Husbandry, and Transport Personnel

1.2.1 Assignment of Personnel

1.2.1.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that minimum training/experience requirements have been identified for all activities (jobs) undertaken and that assignments are made appropriately.

1.2.2 Training of Personnel

1.2.2.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that training needs have been identified and personnel have completed training or have sufficient experience with the use of the equivalent of MAC certifiable techniques.

1.2.3 Work Instructions

1.2.3.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that they produce and make readily available to all personnel documented work instructions, photographs, or diagrams to enable them to undertake their work in a consistent manner. These instructions may also be given by means of a training manual.

1.2.4 Compliance with Workplace Laws

1.2.4.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate compliance with all appropriate local and international laws and regulations affecting their workplace.

1.3 Traceability of MAC Certified Marine Aquarium Organisms

1.3.1 Documentation

1.3.1.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should demonstrate how their documentation system assures that a marine aquarium organism labeled as MAC Certified comes from a MAC Certified collection area or supplier.

1.3.2 Certified Status

1.3.2.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that they have their own methods to identify marine aquarium organisms. This may be by labels, location within facilities, etc., but should be readily traceable to an inventory system.

1.3.3 Control of Certified Status

1.3.3.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that the MAC certified status of marine aquarium organisms is never in doubt and that there is never co-mingling of MAC certified and uncertified marine aquarium organisms.

1.3.4 Co-mingling

1.3.4.1 At no time should MAC certified and uncertified marine aquarium organisms be co-mingled.

1.3.5 Traceability Pre- and Post-Acclimatization

1.3.5.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that they maintain traceability of certified status. This can be achieved by a manual paperwork system or a computerized database inventory system. Such systems should be based on marine aquarium organisms being dispatched only when they are fully acclimatized and in optimum health.

All organizations in the chain of custody should devise means by which the certified status of the marine aquarium organism's are maintained throughout their acclimatization process.

1.3.6 Identification Control

1.3.6.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate the robustness of their tracing system from receipt to dispatch of the marine aquarium organisms.

1.3.7 Control of MAC Label Pack

1.3.7.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate the security and robustness of their control over the use of MAC Labels.

1.4 Handling, Husbandry, and Transport Management

1.4.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that their personnel have suitable work instructions for each activity that they perform and the amount of instruction provided is appropriate to the training and experience of the individual concerned.

1.4.2 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that regular systems inspection and testing is undertaken.

1.4.3 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that they plan their activities so that they are performed in a skilled and consistent manner, including:

- identifying the appropriate handling and holding equipment;
- deciding upon any regular checks (e.g., water quality, etc.) that have to be undertaken;
- ensuring that logbooks or similar documents are completed; and
- ensuring that work instructions, photographs, or diagrams are produced and made readily available.

1.5 Care of Buyer's Property

1.5.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that they store and use this property in the appropriate manner and ensure that any necessary training is given before its use is permitted. Any damage, loss, or theft should be documented and reported to the owner as soon as possible.

1.6 Record Keeping

1.6.1 Receipt and Dispatch Records

1.6.1.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should keep manual or computerized records of all MAC Certified marine aquarium organisms entering and leaving their premises. These should include Dead On Arrival (DOA) and Dead After Arrival (DAA) information.

1.6.2 Traceability Records

1.6.2.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to trace outgoing to incoming MAC Certified Marine Aquarium Organisms.

1.6.3 Record Retention

1.6.3.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should keep records for one year. Manual records can be consolidated into computerized form.

Computer held data should be backed up on a regular basis.

1.7 Control of Nonconformity

1.7.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should have a log of complaints maintained by the supplier and buyer.

This log if used properly can be an effective improvement tool and can also contain problems raised by any person within or outside the collecting organization and should contain:

- what, if any, short-term corrective action was necessary;
- what long-term corrective action is necessary;
- who is responsible for resolving the issue; and
- the time scale for closing the issue.

1.8 Transshipment and Consolidation

1.8.1 Shipment Handling

1.8.1.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should have a legal document showing the access to a MAC Certified acclimatization/holding facility.

1.8.1.2 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that the marine aquarium organisms are collected from the appropriate authority as soon as they are authorized to do so.

1.8.1.3 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that consignments are not accepted with the knowledge that the declared shipping time will be exceeded in more than 1% of transactions.

1.8.1.4 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that bags are only opened at an acclimatization facility and that under no circumstances are marine aquarium organisms re-oxygenated.

1.8.2 Transport from Collectors and Fishers to Exporters by Intermediary Agents (i.e., Middlemen/women)

1.8.2.1 All agents should have a document showing their access to a MAC Certified acclimatization/holding facility.

1.8.2.2 All agents should be able to document or demonstrate that the marine aquarium organisms under their care are handled and shipped within a timeframe and under conditions suitable for the maintenance of optimal organism health.

1.8.2.3 All agents should be able to document or demonstrate that consignments are accepted and shipped with the knowledge that the shipping time and conditions are appropriate to maintain optimal organism health.

1.8.2.4 All agents should be able to document or demonstrate that bags are only opened at a MAC Certified acclimatization facility and that under no circumstances are marine aquarium organisms re-oxygenated.

1.8.2.5 All agents should be able to document or demonstrate that at all times segregation of MAC Certified and uncertified organisms is maintained.

1.8.2.6 All agents should be able to document or demonstrate that they do not batch organisms, i.e., combine marine aquarium organisms together into larger groups in the same container.

1.8.2.7 All agents should be able to document or demonstrate that they pack and ship the stock from different collectors and fishers in ways that maintain traceability of specific specimens to specific collectors or fishers.

2 Acclimatization of Marine Organisms

2.1 Upon Arrival

2.1.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that if the DOA, at the species level of a consignment, is more than 1%, then:

- it is recorded;
- the batch is marked as uncertified; and
- the cause of death is investigated and recorded.

2.1.2 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that marine aquarium organisms are not moved into the general holding facility until they have been properly acclimatized, i.e., separated from previously held stock, clearly marked, acclimatized, and rested until normal healthy behavior has been re-established.

A trained individual should make the assessment of whether an organism has been sufficiently acclimatized, to make the transition in optimal health.

To reduce the stress of a marine aquarium organism in transit, activities such as re-oxygenation are prohibited. If a bag containing a marine aquarium organism must at any time be opened, then that organism should go through a full acclimatization process.

2.2 Upon Commencement of Acclimatization through to Dispatch

2.2.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that if the DAA, at the species level of a consignment, is more than 1%, then:

- it is recorded;
- the batch is marked as uncertified; and
- the cause of death is investigated and recorded.

3 Holding of Marine Aquarium Organisms

3.1 Holding Facilities

3.1.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that:

- all marine aquarium organisms are displayed in a manner which precludes interference by unauthorized people;
- unauthorized people do not handle the organisms;
- the appropriate equipment is available to measure variables such as water pH, etc. within the prescribed limits to maintain optimal health of the organisms;
- instrumentation is calibrated on a regular basis;
- the filtration system, whether internal or external, is maintained in efficient order; and
- water purity is checked by chemical analysis of the water parameters using commercially available test kits.

All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that the marine aquarium organisms are:

- kept in accommodation that is adequate in construction, size, amenities, and position in the premises;
- protected from exposed to excessive light, heat, or cold;
- not subject to rapid fluctuation in light, heat, or chemical composition of their water, other than for the controlled treatment of disease or as part of a controlled breeding program;
- situated in tanks so that visual inspections are easily carried out; and
- kept in aquaria that reflect their natural climatic conditions or in climatic conditions that maintain their optimal health.

All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that:

- all food is stored in impervious closed containers, which can, if necessary and appropriate, be easily cleaned; and
- good hygiene is undertaken to minimize the risk of insect or rodent infestation.

Additional guidance for exporters, importers, transshippers and retailers is given in Annexes 1 to 4 to this document.

3.2 Water Quality and Temperature

3.2.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate how they maintain marine aquarium organisms at optimal health in the holding facility.

Generally, a closed holding system should contain the following components:

- biological filter;
- protein skimmer;
- sand filters or equivalent;
- ozonizer;
- UV sterilizer;

- chiller;
- holding tanks; and
- quarantine tanks.

Generally, an open holding system should contain the following components:

- UV sterilizer;
- holding tanks; and
- quarantine tanks.

All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate how they maintain the optimal levels of water quality and temperature and describe how they check and maintain this on a regular basis. As a minimum, the parameters described should be:

- physical, biological, and chemical specification of source and top-up water;
- water temperature in °C ± x °C;
- water pH;
- salinity;
- water sp. gravity ;
- ammonia;
- dissolved O_2 ;
- minimum water exchanges in x per 24 hour period;
- use of copper; and
- use of pharmaceuticals.

There will be different specifications for different species and quarantine and acclimatization holding areas.

4 Dispatch and Packing of Marine Aquarium Organisms

4.1 Identification of Outgoing Marine Aquarium Organisms

4.1.1 Labeling

4.1.1.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that the contents of each box in a shipment display an external label or attached documentation with referral documentation giving the following information:

- consignor - name and address;
- consignee - name, address, and off-hours contact telephone number;
- date and time of packing and dispatch;
- airport or port of destination and route;
- accepted scientific names and local common names of species enclosed to be accompanied by a document containing this information;
- required temperature range;
- a note of any organism hazardous to humans; and
- declared shipping time.

4.1.2 Invoicing

4.1.2.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that invoices clearly distinguish between MAC Certified and uncertified marine aquarium organisms and also include a description of the organisms, the quantity of the organisms, the declared shipping time and the organization's MAC chain of custody certification registration code and expiration date.

4.1.3 Control of Certified Sales

4.1.3.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that a record is kept of all certified marine aquarium organisms dispatched. It should be possible to relate certified sales output information to certified organism input information.

4.1.4 Dispatch

4.1.4.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate how marine aquarium organisms are packed in suitable containers that comply with the climatic conditions, the journey length, and the safety requirements of the organisms.

All organizations in the chain of custody should document their packing systems for each client and time of year and state when heating or cooling packs are required.

4.1.5 Make Weights

4.1.5.1 It is recognized that, to be cost effective, in some circumstances ”make weights” are included as part of a consignment. All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document an agreement with the buyer as to what species are acceptable as make weights and the maximum amount of make weight allowable per shipment.

4.1.6 Declared Shipping Time

4.1.6.1 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate how the declared shipping time for each packing has been calculated and documented.

4.1.6.2 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate how the declared shipping time for each packing has been verified. This should be through the analysis of feedback from an organization's buyer, etc.

4.1.6.3 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate how records of DOA and DAA relate to the packaging system used through the analysis of feedback from the buyer, etc.

4.1.6.4 All organizations in the chain of custody should be able to document or demonstrate that marine aquarium organisms are unpacked at the final destination within the stated declared shipping time.

Annex 1 - Export Facilities Supplementary Guidance

(a) Export Holding Facility Water Quality

Water quality should be assessed regularly and managed and maintained within the following parameters:

- free ammonia level should be maintained below 0.001mg/l in sea water;
- nitrite should not exceed 0.125mg/l in sea water;
- nitrate should not exceed that in the water supply by 40mg/l; and
- water pH level should be between 7.8 to 8.5.

(b) Chemicals

Chemicals should only be used when necessary and then only in accordance with good husbandry and as agreed previously by a veterinary practice for the following classes:

- buffers;
- ion exchange materials;
- vital dyes;
- vaccines;
- sedatives; and
- antibiotics.

(c) Health and Care of Species at the Export Facility

Marine aquarium organisms should:

- be held in as stress free an environment as possible to maintain optimal health;
- not be overcrowded;
- be separated if they fight;
- be kept in an appropriately lit environment with diurnal cycles maintained;
- be fed when kept for more than four days or sooner as required for optimal health;
- be given medication according to the prescribed dose. No discharge from an open system is allowed;
- be minimally handled to avoid stress; and
- be fed at an appropriate time before being air-shipped as required to maintain optimal health.

(d) Export Screening and Shipping Methods

There should be:

- screening of marine aquarium organisms preferably through transparent jars and plastic bags or in large tray tables designed for this purpose; and
- minimal handling of an organism when transferring to a jar or plastic bag for shipping.

When preparing for transportation to buyer:

- the size of plastic bags should be big enough to allow the fish to swim or turn around;
- the maximum number of marine aquarium organisms in a plastic bag should be one;
- the level of water inside the plastic bag for shipment should cover the entire body of the organism at a sufficient level for free movement;
- the amount of oxygen in the bag should be sufficient to keep the organism at as near optimal health as possible for the length of the declared shipping time;
- fish should be fed at an appropriate time before being air shipped as required to maintain optimal health; and
- any organism infected with parasites and bacteria should not be dispatched;

(e) Packing for Export

The consignor should give 48 hours notice to the consignee of the estimated time of arrival of shipment.

The marine aquarium organisms should:

- be transported by the most expeditious means;
- be packed in a manner, at a minimum, which complies with the current IATA Live Animal Regulations. These regulations require that fish be packed so that they will survive 48 hours from the time of their acceptance by an airline. Due regard should be given to behavioral characteristics of the species concerned;

- only be dispatched in direct response to an order that has been received;
- be packaged as "make weights" only if previously agreed to by the buyer. Any previously agreed substitutions should be notified at least 24 hours in advance of arrival;
- not be shipped if showing overt signs of clinical disease; and
- not be packed more than 12 hours prior to “close out” time.

Annex 2 - Import Facilities Supplementary Guidance

(a) Importer

- The importer, i.e., the person or business upon whose license the import is made, under all circumstances should accept primary responsibility for any consignment ordered after it has been dispatched in good faith and left the country of origin. Late arrival of shipments for any reason does not absolve an importer from this responsibility.
- The importer or its representative should make all reasonable efforts to expedite the clearance of the consignment and transport to its destination.
- The shipment should be completed by a means and in circumstances that do not prejudice the well being of the marine aquarium organisms.

(b) General Requirements

- All reasonable precautions should be taken to prevent the outbreak and spread of diseases. These may include disinfecting nets and using a specified net for each tank in individually filtered aquaria. In centralized systems, precautions may include efficient UV filtration or tank isolation.
- Records of disease outbreaks, treatments, and mortalities (DOA and DAA) should be maintained. These should be related to particular batches of marine aquarium organisms whenever practicable.
- Only trained personnel, in line with recommended prescribed dosages, should use antibiotics.
- When tanking fish, due regard should be given to the physical and behavioral needs of each species.

(c) Import Holding Facility Water Quality

Water quality should be assessed regularly and managed and maintained within the following parameters:

- free ammonia level should be maintained below 0.001mg/l in sea water;
- nitrite should not exceed 0.125mg/l in sea water;
- nitrate should not exceed that in the water supply by 40mg/l; and
- water pH level should be between 7.8 to 8.5.

(d) Chemicals

Chemicals should only be used when necessary and then only in accordance with good husbandry and as agreed previously by a veterinary practice for the following classes:

- buffers;
- ion exchange materials;
- vital dyes;
- vaccines;
- sedatives; and
- antibiotics.

(e) Health and Care of Species at the Import Facility

Marine aquarium organisms should:

- be held in as stress free an environment as possible to maintain optimal health;
- not be overcrowded;
- be separated if they fight;
- be kept in an appropriately lit environment with diurnal cycles maintained;
- be fed when kept for more than four days or sooner as required for optimal health;
- be given medication according to the prescribed dose. No discharge from an open system is allowed;
- be minimally handled to avoid stress; and
- be fed at an appropriate time before being air-shipped as required to maintain optimal health.

(f) Unpacking

Marine aquarium organisms should:

- be unpacked promptly upon arrival;
- be unpacked by suitably trained and/or experienced staff;

- be unpacked in dim light conditions. Organisms should not be exposed to strong natural or artificial light unless required for optimal health of the organisms;
- be acclimatized to the physical and chemical water conditions in the holding facility using all reasonably practicable means. Particular attention being paid to those factors—e.g., pH, temperature, and ammonia—which may have altered substantially during transport;
- be treated as appropriate if showing overt signs of distress, injury, or disease. This may require the affected individuals or populations to be isolated. Organisms thus treated should not be sold until treatment is finished and no overt signs of the infection can be seen. Veterinary consultation may be required; and
- before sale, be separated from previously held stock, clearly marked and rested for a minimum of 48 hours or until a normal behavioral and feeding pattern has been re-established, whichever proves the longer period, if newly imported (either direct import or via consolidation).

(g) CITES

- When importing CITES listed species the appropriate import and export permits should be obtained. Details of the import permit, i.e., permit number or photocopy of the original, should be provided for the purchaser.

(h) Dispatch

- A record of all marine aquarium organisms imported and sold, to include source and destination, should be maintained. This may be achieved by retention of orders and invoices.
- Materials used in packing should either be disposed of hygienically or, if to be reused, properly disinfected.
- A record of marine aquarium organisms bought and sold, including information on source and destination and MAC Certified chain of custody details, should be maintained. This may be in the form of invoices and orders.

Annex 3 - Transshippers/Consolidators Supplementary Guidance

(a) General

- A carrier or agent in the country of origin should not accept a consignment of marine aquarium organisms for which no documentary evidence of an order is available, whether that consignment is prepaid or charged collect.
- IATA Live Animal Regulations should be followed especially with regard to the rapid discharge of the cargo.
- If a marine aquarium organism has been in transit in excess of 30 hours, it should be acclimatized in a backup holding facility until optimal health has been reached.
- Transshipping or consolidation agents should demonstrate, through ownership or by contractual arrangement, access to a backup acclimatization/holding facility.
- Marine aquarium organisms should not be forwarded if by doing so they will exceed the declared shipping time.

(b) Unpacking

- Marine aquarium organism shipping packages should not be opened until they have arrived at their final destination.
- Marine aquarium organisms should not be re-oxygenated.
- If marine aquarium organism shipping packages have to be opened before they reach their final destination then the marine aquarium organism contained within should be immediately sent to a certified holding facility for acclimatization. Those organisms should not be forwarded to their final destination until fully acclimatized and optimal health reached.

Annex 4 - Retail Facilities Supplementary Guidance

(a) General

- All marine aquarium organisms should be in good health as far as can be reasonably determined without veterinary inspection.
- Fish, which may be aggressive to one another, should be packed separately. It may be necessary to prevent these fish from having any visual contact.
- Tanks should be checked daily and cleaned as often as is necessary to maintain good hygiene standards, consistent with the rate of stock turnover and consequent stocking densities.
- Particular attention should be paid to the removal of uneaten food and mortalities, as both of these can release ammonia as they decay.
- Fish should be caught in such a way as to reduce the stress induced and ensure no physical damage occurs to the organism.

(b) Sale

- The new owners of marine aquarium organisms should be very carefully instructed in the technique required to acclimatize the organism to their aquaria.
- No marine aquarium organism with an obvious significant abnormality, which would seriously reduce its quality of life, should be offered for sale. If in doubt, veterinary advice should be sought.
- Every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that the buyer purchases marine aquarium organisms suitable for the aquarium for which it is intended. When offering advice, due regard should be given to the time the aquaria has been established and the stocking, both in terms of species and density.
- Under no circumstances should a brand new aquaria be established and stocked full immediately. If asked to do this, the retailer should advise the buyer as to the inadvisability to this course of action and explain why he/she should refuse to do so.
- To enable staff to fulfill this guidance, a full range of books for reference should be available. Less experienced staff members should be encouraged to consult a senior member of staff whenever they are uncertain.
- Particular attention should be paid to informing the buyers of the risks associated with any potentially dangerous species. This information should include first aid procedures.
- Marine aquarium organisms sold to hobbyists in a retail outlet should be placed in containers suitable for the journey to be undertaken, helping to ensure they arrive in good health. Special regard should be paid to any known climatic conditions and length of journey. The containers should
  (a) contain a sufficient oxygen supply for the organisms for the duration of their journey;
  (b) contain an appropriate quantity of water;
  (c) have sufficient insulation to prevent large fluctuations in temperate; and
  (d) be covered to exclude light.
- "After sales" advice should be offered to buyers who purchase marine aquarium organisms.
- Accurate instructions on the care and welfare of the marine aquarium organism purchased should be given to the buyer at the time of sale as appropriate.
- No marine aquarium organism should be sold to any person under the age of 16 years who is unknown to the retailer unless that person is accompanied by a parent or legal guardian or provides appropriate written consent.
- Subsequent sales to a juvenile less than 16 years (but over 12 years) of age who is known to the retailer can be carried out in the absence of a parent or legal guardian or appropriate written consent, provided that the retailer is satisfied as far as possible that
  (a) the parent/guardian would not object to the acquisition;
  (b) the juvenile is sufficiently knowledgeable as to the needs, care, and nature of the species acquired; and
  (c) the juvenile's intention towards the acquisition is consistent with the well-being of the organism concerned.
- Potentially harmful species should not be sold to anyone under 16 years of age.